Open Journal of Science, Philosophy & Theology *ISSN: 3105-3041* *Vol 1(2), 2025*

Periodic Exhortations on Faith and Society

The March of Rights: Why a Generation Protests and Heaven Still Rules

Sixbert Sangwa

Independent Scholar and Watchman, Fellow Pilgrim, A Voice Crying in the Wilderness
Author's Contact: ssangwa@openchristian.education
Website: sixbert.openchristian.education

Foreword: To the Youth at the Gates

This reflection is offered with affection for sons and daughters who lift placards by day and sigh in their rooms by night. It is not a mockery of hunger for justice. It is a question addressed to the altar where that hunger kneels. If you have felt the tug of a higher throne while the crowd chants your name, you are the intended reader. I write as a fellow pilgrim who has learned that zeal without surrender is smoke without fire. May every paragraph remain gentle in spirit even when the claims are weighty. May the one who still hears, hear.

Keywords: Gen Z protest culture; divine authority and submission; intercession for rulers; rebellion and Satan's fall; rights and righteousness; self-love gospel; eternal kingship.

Cite as: Sangwa, S. (2025). The March of Rights: Why a Generation Protests and Heaven Still Rules. *Open Journal of Science, Philosophy & Theology*, 1(3). Open Christian Press. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17617346

Disclaimer: *The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect any institution.*

Introduction: When Streets Become Sanctuaries

There is a new liturgy in the square. Chants rise like antiphons. Drums keep time as if for a procession. Phones glow like a thousand candles. For many, protest has become a sacrament of identity. The cathedral once hosted confession. The campus now hosts catharsis. Yet after the crowd disperses, a quieter ache returns. We were not designed to keep vigil around our own anger forever. The soul needs a throne more than a megaphone.

The decisive question is older than every slogan: who authorizes authority. If power rises from people, then rebellion is worship. If power descends from God, then rebellion is war. Scripture answers without apology. *"There is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are instituted by God"* (Romans 13:1). Paul wrote this under a ruler few would praise. His claim rests not on the virtue of kings but on the sovereignty of the King. Peter, writing into an empire not known for kindness, commands, *"Submit to every human authority because of the Lord"* and *"honor the emperor"* (1 Peter 2:13–17). Wisdom already declared, *"By me kings reign"* (Proverbs 8:15). Authority descends; it is not manufactured by a trending page.

***Parable*:** A river envied the hawk that soared. Tearing itself from its banks in the name of freedom, it became a swamp and lost the sea. Freedom without order does not fly. It drowns.

Thrones above Banners: The Gift and Gravity of Office

From the first page of Scripture humanity receives dominion as a stewardship underneath God, not as an achievement over God (Genesis 1:26–28). Authority therefore is sacramental. You may dislike the vessel; the office is still a loan from the Lord. David refused to kill Saul when justice seemed obvious, precisely because the office was God's to remove, not his to seize (1 Samuel 24). Jesus paid tax from a fish's mouth and taught His followers to render to Caesar and to God in their proper spheres (Matthew 17:24–27; Matthew 22:21). Submission in Scripture is not servility. It is worship expressed as trust.

Lucifer's March: The First Protest and Its Echoes

Rebellion did not begin in a colony or a parliament. It began in heaven. *"I will ascend,"* said the creature who coveted the order's top rung (Isaiah 14:12–15). Eden rehearsed the same thesis when the serpent promised, *"You will be like God"* (Genesis 3:5). The primal sin is not curiosity. It is insurrection. When a culture decorates rebellion as virtue, it decorates the knife that cut the world.

The antidote appears on Golgotha. The universe is redeemed not by slogans but by submission. "*He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death"* (Philippians 2:8). At the foot of the cross the Church learns that holy power kneels before it stands, and conquers by yielding to the Father.

The Liturgy of Outrage: Why a Generation Is Restless

Many in Gen Z hunger for justice with a sincerity that should move our older hearts to gratitude. Yet a counterfeit catechism sells perpetual agitation without altar, priest, or absolution. Algorithms monetise grievance. Identity becomes performance. Mercy becomes a mood. Exhaustion follows. A conscience that never bows must carry a god-sized burden. It cannot.

Culture now preaches that authority is violence and feelings are law. The result is a crowd that calls rebellion courage and obedience weakness. Scripture speaks plainly: *"Rebellion is like the sin of divination"* because it seeks influence apart from God (1 Samuel 15:23). Outrage that refuses prayer becomes a charm we wave toward heaven.

***Parable*:** Two towers rose on a plain. One hid deep pilings under the ground. The other flashed glass under the sun. People admired the second. Wind taught them to respect foundations.

Intercession before Insurrection

The apostolic command is not coded for easy days. *"Petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in authority"* (1 Timothy 2:1–2). Prayer for rulers is not complicity with their sins; it is combat against the powers whispering to them and to us (Ephesians 6:12). We appeal to the One who "changes times and seasons, removes kings and establishes kings" (Daniel 2:21) and who turns a ruler's heart "like a channel of water" wherever He wills (Proverbs 21:1).

The watchman's vocation is therefore kneeling. Intercession precedes protest. When the Church prays first, she may still march, but her march becomes an echo of obedience rather than an act of idolatry.

The King without Term Limits

Earthly systems rotate officials to restrain corruption. Prudence requires such measures among sinners. Heaven is different. *"Your throne, God, is forever and ever"* (Psalm 45:6). The final announcement is not electoral, it is eschatological: *"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ"* (Revelation 11:15). To imagine that authority must expire to remain good is to project our suspicion of men onto the character of God. That projection births a delusion that dethrones reverence. The Ancient of Days does not campaign. He reigns.

***Parable*:** A child demanded a new sun each morning lest the old one grow tyrannical. The sky answered with silence. The child learned the difference between constancy and coercion.

Rights and Righteousness: The Mirage and the Mountain

The modern creed insists that rights fabricate righteousness. Scripture reverses the order. Righteousness establishes any claim worth calling a right. The imago Dei grants dignity before any parliament recognizes it (Genesis 1:27; Psalm 139:13–16). Governments can codify what God gives; they cannot conjure it. When law pretends to be the fountain of worth, the state becomes an idol. We will alternately deify it when it grants our desires and demonize it when it denies them.

The language of equality and human rights has sometimes defended the oppressed. It has also been weaponized to erase distinctions God calls good. Equality of worth is biblical. Interchangeability of role is Babel. The body of Christ flourishes because the eye is not the hand and the hand is not the foot (1 Corinthians 12:14–20). When sameness is treated as sanctity, wisdom is mocked as bigotry and order is dismissed as oppression.

The Self as Shrine: How Pride Wears a Smile

A fashionable catechism baptizes pride with therapeutic water. It calls itself self-awareness, self-love, and self-actualization. Scripture foresaw the epidemic: *"People will be lovers of self"* (2 Timothy 3:2). The Lord does not abolish the self; He properly orders it. *"If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me"* (Luke 9:23). Real health begins where sovereignty ends. God gives grace to the humble and resists the proud (James 4:6).

When pulpits exchange repentance for reassurance, they train the Church to admire her reflection more than her Redeemer. The enemy does not mind religion if the ego keeps its crown. He will let us speak of justice if we spare our idols. The gospel, however, is a cross before it is a crown.

***Parable*:** A mirror promised a thirsty traveler water if he stared long enough. He died beautiful.

Ordered Distinction: Why Boundaries Bless

From creation onward God separates light from darkness, land from sea, and finally man from woman (Genesis 1:3–10, 27). Distinction is not cruelty. It is creation. When the culture demands sameness in the name of equality, it exchanges a symphony for a siren. To say roles differ is not to say worth is unequal. It is to honor the Composer who wrote parts for harmony rather than noise.

Parents and pastors must find courage to name design as design with gentleness and clarity. Refusing to speak for fear of labels is not humility. It is abdication. Love tells the truth even when the truth costs applause.

Holy Exceptions: When Disobedience Is Obedience

Submission is the norm, not the cage. There are moments when rulers command what God forbids or forbid what God commands. The apostles answer, "We must obey God rather than people" (Acts 5:29). Daniel opens his windows to pray. The Hebrew young men refuse the idol even when the furnace roars (Daniel 6; Daniel 3). In every case, disobedience is not a hobby. It is a last resort born of a higher yes to God. They resist without usurping. They suffer without revenge. Their courage is cruciform, not chaotic.

This distinction matters. Rebellion seeks to seize the throne. Faithful resistance refuses to betray the King. The first reenacts Satan's fall. The second resembles Christ's obedience.

What Prayer Does to Protest

Prayer reorders the affections. It takes anger by the hand and leads it into the temple. There anger becomes lament, petition, wisdom, and patience. We begin to ask not only that rulers change, but that we embody the righteousness we demand. We learn to bless and not curse (Romans 12:14). We learn to honor everyone, love the brothers and sisters, fear God, and honor the emperor (1 Peter 2:17). We seek the peace of the city even in exile, for in its peace we find our peace (Jeremiah 29:7).

A praying generation may still gather in the streets. Yet the gathering will be an echo, not the melody. The melody will be shared life under the Word,

works of mercy for the least, and bold witness to Christ crucified and risen.

***Parable*:** A brass trumpet sat in a museum, polished and silent. War came, and no one heard the alarm. Another trumpet, dented from use, saved a city because someone still knew how to breathe.

Counsel to Parents, Pastors, and Professors

Parents, bless your children at the door each morning and teach them to bow before God so they need not bow before fashion. Pastors, preach providence before politics, holiness before hashtags, the fear of the Lord before the fear of missing out. Professors, help students see that rights rhetoric without a Lawgiver collapses into slogans. Give them Augustine's restlessness for God rather than the culture's restlessness for self. Reintroduce fasting, intercession, and the Psalms. These practices return the will to its rightful hierarchy.

Let Christian institutions present civic engagement as a subset of discipleship. Protest may have a place, but prayer has the throne. Teach that submission is beautiful and that obedience can be brave. Recover the old language of vocation, authority, and honor. The future does not need louder microphones. It needs deeper roots.

A Watchman's Rebuke of Rebellion

The rebuke that follows is offered with tears. Rebellion made an angel a devil and a garden a grave. It still flatters the young with counterfeit courage. The spirit that celebrates insurrection as a lifestyle is not prophetic. It is serpentine. It multiplies grievances and calls them gospels. It trains the tongue to curse rulers and then wonders why prayer has no power. If we would see nations healed, let us dethrone Self. Let us confess where we baptized pride as awakening. Let us repent where we traded ordered love for chaotic liberty.

***Parable*:** A city hired a choir to drown out the sirens. The songs were sweet while the fire spread. Only when the roof fell did they remember the watchman.

Conclusion: Knees that Govern

The world will stay noisy. Platforms will reward heat more than light. Yet the kingdom advances with a quieter thunder. One believer on her knees at midnight is a greater political force than a million retweets. Submission to God restores the soul to gravity. Honor toward rulers, even flawed ones, keeps the heart from bitterness. Intercession invites heaven to write what hell has drafted.

Therefore let us adopt the posture of the Lamb who reigns. Pray for leaders without ceasing. Ask the Lord to transform them or remove them according to His wise will. Refuse the delusion that ultimate authority must expire to stay good. Refuse the catechism that enthrones the self and calls it virtue. Hold fast to the truth that any right worth having is first the radiance of righteousness, not the grant of government. Remember that our King does not resign. He is gentle and lowly and His scepter is straight. Trade "I will ascend" for "Your will be done" (Luke 22:42). Then your voice will carry a weight the world cannot measure, because it will echo Another's.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus Christ!